



Off To A Fast Start

By Monroe S. Miller

The spring of 1991 will go into my memory as one of the best spring seasons ever. The April showers were plentiful, well timed and yet never heavy. We were not forced into any extra bunker work by the usual downpours we can get this time of the year.

I will also mark this past couple of months as producers of just about the heaviest crop of grasses—all varieties—I can recall. As near as I've been able to understand, most Wisconsin golf courses were in the same circumstances of too much mowing and too few employees.

It was a shame in a lot of ways. Golf course superintendents tend to look at a golf course's potential and are frustrated when that potential isn't reached. This spring, it was the prolific growth that caused some of us to come up a little bit short in the playing condition department. Given a little more help, the season could have been nearly perfect.

However, that excess was far more tolerable than, say, winterkill.

Another thing some course managers will remember is the typical spring weather variability. I think it was best exemplified by the contrasts between the UW-Madison graduation weekend (May 18th) and Memorial Day weekend (May 25th).

Fortunately, graduation ceremonies were held inside. It was a cold 50 degrees F. and rainy outside.

Less than one week later, Tom Harrison and Randy Smith bumped into one another at a loading dock while picking up some fungicide for *Pythium* control. Randy had a case confirmed by the UW Plant Disease Lab; Tom was suspicious of disease at the Bluff, especially on a couple of newly constructed greens. At the same exact moment, Bob Vavrek was in Door County looking at some pink snowmold! I had just completed spraying fairways for a serious, annual *Fusarium* sp. outbreak.

Those weather extremes convince you of the truth in the phrase "Wisconsin winter spring/summer spring! First,

warm days bring the blossoms out early. Then the cool, even cold weather returns to hold them in time for longer than you would ever expect. Redbuds in Madison this year on my golf course seemed to have blossoms on them for over two weeks.

And the hot days at the end of May pushed the last of the buds and blossoms out early. Black locust, for example, had dropped nearly all of their flowers by Memorial Day weekend. On our course, we had to use a leaf blower to clear the blossoms from the 9th green before we could mow it for the holiday events—bushels and bushels, literally, of sweet smelling flowers.

Onward with another Wisconsin summer. This is looking like it could be a long season for our golf players and for us, too.

Golf course superintendents aren't the only people impressed by the Toro Company's new Hydrojet 3000.

The Hydrojet was a big success in this year's "Governor's New Products Awards".

The contest, sponsored by the Wisconsin Society of Professional Engineers, is a competition among Wisconsin's finest new inventions.

Toro of Tomah won the "Best in the State" award for Division I (the state's largest companies) for developing this machine that injects high-pressure water into a compacted soil to loosen it with minimum surface disruption. Obviously, this is particularly useful on a golf course because it allows a minimum of disruption to players.

The WSPE made the presentations at their annual meeting on May 20th in Madison.

Congratulations to the Toro Co. Ed Devinger's excitement about the Hydrojet is shared by many!

I expect to be seeing more and more of Bruce Worzella starting this fall. His

daughter Beth, a West Bend East graduate this spring, has accepted an athletic scholarship to the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She will compete on the UW women's golf team.

Recruited by the team coach, Dennis Tiziani, Beth chose Wisconsin over both Notre Dame and Mankato (Minnesota) State. She joins two of Wisconsin's other best young women players—Dana Tzakis and Erika Brown—on the team.

You'll better understand now when you hear Bruce humming "ON WISCONSIN" and "VARSITY" in his red sport coat, red necktie and red socks!

We had a visitor to the Madison area in the first week of June. Dr. Milt Engelke, a turfgrass plant breeder from Texas A & M University, was educated in Wisconsin, earning a B.S. degree from Platteville, a M.S. and Ph.D. in Agronomy from the CALS, UW-Madison. His daughter graduated from Middleton High School and he flew up from his headquarters in Dallas to attend the ceremonies.

Wayne Kussow, Gayle Worf, Bob Newman, Chuck Koval and several Madison area golf course superintendents hosted Milt for lunch. Afterwards, he was given a tour of the NOER facility.

Engelke is heading a very active turfgrass variety development program at Texas A & M, and he receives very considerable support from the USGA. He is involved with warm season grasses, but is also on the verge of releasing some new bentgrass varieties.

It was an interesting visit from a native son, one we can be quite proud of; he certainly has strong ties to Wisconsin and loves to return for a visit. Incidentally, he was also very impressed by Wisconsin's NOER Research Facility.

A recent report by the Council for Aid to Education showed the University of Wisconsin-Madison received more corporate support and more private donations than any other Big Ten School. All who have given to the NOER facility are included in that sum.

The Council also listed the UW as third in the nation for the 1989-1990 school year with \$44.6 million in corporate support. It further reported the
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University of Wisconsin-Madison received \$124.3 million in private donations in the same period, a 22 percent increase over the previous year.

Impressive figures like that don't happen by accident; they result from generous alumni and friends and lots of hard work by staff members at the University of Wisconsin Foundation. The citizens of Wisconsin should be very proud of their great state university.

Don Steinmetz and his staff at Yahara Hills must have been shocked right out of their shoes on May 14th.

It was hot that Tuesday in our town—a record-setting 89 degrees. In fact, it was apparently so hot that a couple of golfers at Yahara dropped their trousers and ditched their shirts and played the 13th hole on the east course in the nude!

The Yahara golf pro called the cops at about 3:30 in the afternoon after he witnessed the nude dudes.

Some players stomped off the golf course, in disgust, even demanding their money back. Some passersby on U.S. Hwy 12-18 called to complain, too.

The cops answered the call and caught up with the sunworshippers on the 15th hole. But, alas, they were dressed again.

Not to worry—there were witnesses who could, ah, . . . identify the pair (of players).

Surely, nude golf isn't apt to become a new fad, is it? Despite the obvious advantages—an even tan, ease in proper address of the ball, no restrictive clothing—I cannot imagine anything cruder than a buck naked four-some of guys on a golf course. Sights like that could force a career change!

But rest assured, if it is going to happen, it will happen in this insane town. After all, Madison now allows nudity on its city beaches. Honest.

Wisconsin is becoming quite a golf mecca these days. We always have had beautiful private golf courses, plentiful and challenging public courses and some really excellent municipal golf courses.

The past ten years brought the golfing public courses like Lake Arrowhead, SentryWorld, Blackwolf Run and Fox Hills National.

But this year will be an unusually bountiful one for new golf courses.

University Ridge opened June 1, capping over two decades of work by

some alumni to bring the University of Wisconsin-Madison its own golf course. It is an 18 hole Robert Trent Jones Jr. design.

Geneva National, as I understand, is hoping to open 36 holes by July 1. One course was designed by Arnold Palmer; the other 18 holes were designed by Lee Trevino.

Also scheduled for July 1 opening is a Wisconsin Dells golf course, Trappers Turn. This golf course was designed by two time U.S. Open champion Andy North and architect Roger Packard.

Lake Breeze Golf Club near Winnebago opened a nine in May and is scheduled to open the back nine near July 4th.

Add to this impressive list Door Creek (Cottage Grove), Apostle Highlands (Bayfield), Highland Park (DePere), Krooked Kreek (Osceola) and Bonny Meade Links (Milton).

Edelweiss Chalet (New Glarus) has a new nine and so does Baraboo C.C. Working on nine hole additions are Castle Rock Golf Club (New London), Evansville Golf Club, Holiday Lodge (Wyerville), Indianhead Golf Course (Mosinee), Lake Park Golf Club (Germantown), Lawsonia Links (Green Lake), Mayville Golf Club and Merrill Golf Club.

Finally, golf course architects are keeping busy, too, with master plan projects, hole redesigns and general golf course improvements all over our state.

This activity indicates a very healthy situation for golf in Wisconsin.

The GCSAA initiated its Legacy Award Program this past year. The program is essentially a scholarship plan for children of GCSAA members.

The scholarships are awarded by an independent board to eligible applicants. The amount of each scholarship awarded is determined by need, which is based on extensive information supplied to a financial aid services company in New Jersey.

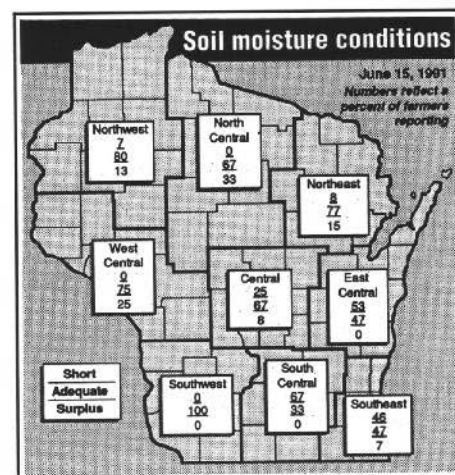
These are non-turfgrass student scholarships, and the Legacy Program is separate from that one.

A college student from Wisconsin has been selected to receive a 1991 Legacy Award from the GCSAA. She is a recent honors graduate from the UW-Madison who will be headed to the University of Minnesota for graduate school.

She is the editor's kid! Congratulations to Amy Miller and thanks to the GCSAA!

Speaking of the weather, the Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics Service's June 15, 1991 report on Wisconsin soil moisture conditions is shown here for your information. This report is compiled by observers in Wisconsin's 72 counties.

Golf course superintendents in Wisconsin aren't the only ones burdened with early season problems brought on by the weather. Many farmers have reported the early moisture caused insect and weed problems in some crops.



July 7, 1991 was an important day for the citizens of Wisconsin. Funding for the UW-Madison Biotechnology Center cleared another hurdle when the U.S. House of Representatives Appropriations Subcommittee on Rural Development, Agriculture and Related Agencies approved \$8.9 million for the center.

Dr. Leo Walsh, retiring dean of the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences at the UW-Madison, worked long and hard on securing this facility for the UW.

Rep. David Obey of Wisconsin serves on the subcommittee that approved the money. He said the full committee rarely reverses an action by one of its subcommittees. Passage by the full committee is even more likely because the chairman of the subcommittee and the chairman of the full committee are the one and same—Rep. Jamie Whitten.

No one, however, is predicting what will happen in the Senate.

Three years ago, Congress appropriated \$50,000 for a feasibility study for the center. Two years ago, it set aside \$600,000 for planning. And last year,

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Congress appropriated \$2.6 million for the first leg of construction.

The \$8.9 million, which is what the university requested, would serve to complete the funding for the project, along with about \$10 million promised by the private sector.

Hardly a day goes by these days that I don't think about how nice it would be to have a few days off. It's been, literally, months since the last day I didn't go over to the golf course. I've been dreaming about one of those mini-vacations.

Turns out a professor of industrial engineering at the University of Miami thinks that short vacations are better for harder workers like golf course superintendents.

David J. Sumanth believes in short refreshers. "These high-momentum workers, from anecdotal evidence, need short weekend vacations or they lose the momentum if they stay out for long periods of time."

"With a short three- or four-day vacation, you can pretty much bounce back."

These short vacations—long weekends—sound like they are tailor-made for the busy superintendent. I think I'll try to plan one myself!

Congratulations to Dr. Neal Jorgenson. He's been named by Chancellor Donna Shalala as the acting dean of the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences.

Neal has been an associate dean for eight years and has proven abilities as an administrator.

He replaces Dr. Leo Walsh as dean and will remain in that position until a new dean is chosen.

Neal grew up on a dairy farm near Luck, Wisconsin. He received a B.S. degree from River Falls, a M.S. and a Ph.D. from Madison. His academic background is in biochemistry and dairy science.

You will enjoy getting to know Dr. Jorgenson. Maybe we'll be able to get him to the WTA Field Day.

Court Overturns Casey Decision

On Friday, June 21, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that local units of government may go beyond federal law in regulating pesticide use.

The decision has far-reaching potential implications for golf course superintendents all across America.

The ruling overturned a Wisconsin Supreme Court ruling against the Washburn County town of Casey.

The court ruled unanimously, a vote that stunned F/RoW/T Coalition Executive Director Russell Weisensel.

The Supreme Court's decision said that local regulation of pesticides wasn't pre-empted by the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act of 1972.

Justice Byron White, writing for the court, said that while the 1972 law is a comprehensive effort to control pesticides, it doesn't ban states—and by extension cities and towns—from doing more. FIFRA gives the federal government power over the registration and labeling of pesticides.

"But," White said, "It certainly does not equate those requirements with a general approval to apply pesticides throughout the nation without regard to regional and local factors like climate, population, geography and water supply."

More details of this major court decision will be presented in the next issue of *THE GRASS ROOTS*.

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The Wisconsin Turfgrass Association 1991 FIELD DAY will be held on Tuesday, August 27th

For a variety of reasons, the event will be sited at the UW-Madison "West Madison Experiment Station", located near the NOER Facility. Details on Registration, Programming and Directions will be forthcoming from Tom Harrison and Tom Schwab.

PLAN TO ATTEND!